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An Empirical Study on the Traits of Information Literacy Level among Senior Secondary Students in Ilorin, Nigeria.

Ismail Olatunji Adeyemi Mr

University of Ilorin, Nigeria, adeyemiismailolatunji@gmail.com

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Abstract

This study examined the information literacy level among secondary school students in Ilorin. This study adopted the disproportionate stratified random sampling techniques. The total population for this study 1958 students. The data for the study was collected through structured questionnaires which were distributed randomly to 210 students. However, only 192 copies of the questionnaire were properly filled and returned for analysis and thus form the basis as sample for this study (N=192). The findings of the study revealed that more than half of the respondents can identify lack of knowledge in a subject area. The study also revealed that majority of the respondents can articulate current knowledge on a topic. Furthermore, it also revealed that a large number of the respondents cannot identify specialist search tools. Also, from the study, it was revealed that noteworthy numbers of the respondents do not use Boolean operators in their search for information. Conclusively, the study shows that information literacy skills are essential for every human being because information is vital to everyone and every walk of life. It was recommended that policy makers in education sector should try and introduce information literacy skills as a subject in the secondary school curriculum so as to ensure that the students have the necessary information literacy skills rather than developing these skills through self-education. It was also recommended that teachers that have skills in information literacy skills should be employed as the facilitators in this subject.

Keywords: Information literacy, traits, secondary school students, Ilorin

Introduction

Traits are inherent characteristics, features, attributes, or qualities possess by a phenomenon or an individual. It is what portrays an individual and can elicit behaviour of the possessor. Generally, information is considered to be essential to every facet of life. It is essential in social development, economic growth, political enlightenment, improving frontier of knowledge, technological development, informed decision-making, and legal regulation. Seaman (2001) asserts that the concept of *information literacy* (IL) was first introduced in 1974 by Paul Zurkowski, the president of the US Information Industry Association, in a proposal submitted to the National Commission on Libraries and Information (NCLIS). Numerous authors agree that the concept of *information literacy* evolved from concepts such as *library instruction*, *bibliographic instruction*, and *user/reader education* (Rader, 1991; Snaveley & Cooper, 1997; Bruce, 2000; Seaman, 2001).

Information literacy is the term used to describe the ability to find and use information effectively in relation to need and purpose (William & Wavell, 2006). Information literacy has been defined variously by different scholars. Breivik (1989) described it as the ability to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information. Thompson (2003) defined it as an ability to identify, locate, evaluate, organize, and effectively use information to address issues or problems at hand that face individuals, communities, and nations. Chartered Instituted of Library and Information Professionals [CILIP] (2004) described information literacy as the ability of knowing when and why you need information, where to find it, and how to evaluate, use and communicate it in an ethical manner. Webber and Johnston (2002) defined information literacy as the adoption of appropriate information behaviour to obtain, through whatever channel or medium, information well fitted to information needs, together with critical awareness of the importance of wise and ethical use of information in society. Tan and Theng (2006) described information literacy as an extensive concept, encompassing all of the other forms of literacy. This study is going to adopt the definition of Montgomery (1997). He described information literacy as an umbrella term which includes electronic searching and information retrieval skills, media skills, research skills, reference skills, learning skills, and study skills.

Based on the foregoing, we can observe that different scholars have identified different traits of an information literate person in their various definitions. The traits of an information literate person can then be categorized to include; the ability to recognize when information is needed (Breivik, 1989; Thompson, 2003; and CILIP 2004), the ability to find information (Thompson 2003; William & Wavell, 2006), the ability to use information effectively (Breivik 1989; Webber & Johnson, 2002; Thompson, 2003; CILIP, 2004; and William & Wavell, 2006). Scholars like Tan and Theng assert that information literacy is a broad term that encompasses various forms of literacy ranging from retrieval skills, media skills, research skills, reference skills, learning skills, and study skills.

In Nigeria, secondary school students are school children or pupils whom are in the second tier of Nigeria's educational system (9-3-4). They must have completed their basic school education before they can be admitted into secondary school. They are usually around 12 to 17 years old depending on their socio-economic background and local school education system. However, there are exception cases where we have pupils that are well above 17 years old which is mostly observable in public secondary schools. Upon the completion of their secondary school education, substantial number of these students will further their studies at tertiary institutions of their choice, be it college or universities, while some will go into menial job or apprenticeship. Hence, it is imperative that schools provide all school children with the necessary skills and competencies to prepare them for the future colleges or possibly workplaces upon high school graduation (Jackson, 2006; Smith et al, 2013; Yu, Abrizah, and Sani, 2016). In Nigeria, education sector is under the residual list where private and government can partake in the sector as stakeholders. Hence, there are privately owned and government owned schools. These government owned schools are further subdivided into federal government owned and state government owned schools. The federal schools are sometimes known as *Unity Schools* while state schools are widely referred to as *Public Schools*.

Hepworth (2000a; 2000b) highlights two main approaches to information literacy that are evident: the most common tries to identify discrete skills and attitudes that can be learnt and measured and highlights works of Doyle (1992), the Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education (Association of College and Research Libraries, 2000) and the SCONUL approach (SCONUL, 1999). The other emphasis the information literate mindset associated with

how an individual experiences and makes sense of his/her world, the work of Bruce (1997) illustrates this approach. This analysis seems to reflect to some extent the approaches identified by Bruce (1997) and is described as the behavioural, constructivist and relational approaches to information literacy (Virkus, 2003).

The Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL) UK identified Information Literacy (IL) as a set of seven skills: *identifying* (recognize information need), *scope* (distinguish ways of addressing information gap), *planning* (construct strategies for locating information), *gathering* (locate and access information), *evaluating* (compare and evaluate information), *managing* (organize, apply and communicate information), and *presenting* (synthesize and create information) of information (Bent & Stubbings, 2011).

Developing as an information literate person is an ongoing and holistic process with often synchronize activities or processes which can be encompassed within the seven pillars of SCONUL Information Literacy. Within each “pillar”, a student can develop from “novice” to “expert” as they progress through the stages of information literacy. Although, as the information world itself is constantly changing and developing, it is possible to move down a pillar as well as progress up it (SCONUL, 2011). The expectations of levels reached on each pillar may be different in different contexts and for different ages and levels of researcher and is also dependent on experience and information need. Any information literacy development must therefore also be considered in the context of the broad information landscape in which an individual operates and their personal information literacy landscape (Bent, 2008). This study adopts the constructs of SCONUL in measuring and validating the level of information literacy skills of secondary school students in Ilorin.

Problem Statement

Today, many secondary school students are graduating from schools without adequate information literacy skills to propel them in their studies and endeavour. Some scholars (Jackson, 2006; Saunder, 2012) stress on the importance of information literacy education in (ILE) in schools. They argue that information literacy is important to every profession, and hence should be integrated as a part of the general education curriculum. Several research has shown that many people’s information literacy ability to judge the validity and reliability of information, and to organize and synthesize the retrieved information for immediate and future use is poor, in

spite of their self-perception of competence (Gross & Lathan, 2012; Smith et al, 2013). Understandably, many countries are on the verge of increasing the recognition of information literacy as one of their main focus; these countries signed the Prague Declaration and Alexandria Proclamation which were declared in 2003 and 2005 at the seminars endorsed by UNESCO (Kratochvil, 2011).

Information literacy is one of the most important learning skills in the 21st century. Hence, it is important for every secondary student to possess the traits of information literate person so as to be ahead in their study and general endeavours. However, there has been dearth of awareness, understanding, and application of information literacy skills amongst secondary school students. In Nigeria, most school managements and committees do not take information literacy seriously. This stems from the general perception that information literacy is not too important for the secondary school children. Majority of the school management or committee thinks information literacy skills or traits can be self-taught (Seaman, 2001). This is evident in the fact that there is no subject for information literacy skills in secondary schools. Above all, the interest of students themselves to learning information literacy skills is minimal which in turns makes them not to possess required traits to be an information literate person (William & Wavell, 2006). Hence, this study seeks to examine the level information literacy level and traits among secondary school students using SCONUL model constructs to validate their level of information literacy.

Research Questions

The research questions for this study include:

1. Can the students identify a problem and their current knowledge on identified gaps?
2. What are the construct strategies secondary school students use for locating information and data?
3. What are the methods secondary school students use to locate and access the information and data they need?
4. What are the ways secondary school students evaluate and manage the information?
5. What are the ways secondary school students present information?

Literature Review

Past studies on information literacy level among secondary school students have been conducted by various scholars. Kwok, Ng, Chu, and Hu (2016) carried out a study on the information literacy among secondary school students in Hong Kong considering factors like actual abilities, self-perceptions and teachers' support. The study adopted a mixed method of research design. Twelve classes of junior secondary school students from a local secondary school were recruited to participate. Each comprised of four classes with varying academic performances. First, an information literacy ability test was administered to examine students' knowledge about information literacy. Then, a questionnaire was distributed to the participants to solicit their perception towards their self-perceived ability in information literacy and teachers' support on information literacy. In addition, some randomly selected participants were selected to participate in follow-up semi-structured focus group interviews. Finding of this study shows that highest-form (Form 3) students performed best in the information literacy ability test. It also revealed that there is more positive perception towards teachers' supports and their abilities.

William and Wavell (2006) carried out a study on conceptions of secondary school teachers on information literacy in the classroom. Data were collected in three stages. In the first stage, teachers' initial conceptions of information literacy were gathered from free-flowing group discussions. In the second stage, a second round of group discussions and interviews were conducted after the period of reflection in the first stage. The two set of discussions were recorded and transcribed, and these formed the basis of data for qualitative analysis using phenomenographic approach to establish a structure of conceptions and key elements associated with them. The results of the study indicate that teachers understood information literacy to be important for lifelong learning but do not feel able to effectively support the development of information literacy in their students within their current curriculum environments. The study identified issues for consideration when establishing effective collaborative partnerships within schools.

Zulkifeli, Yu, and Ismail (2016) carried out a study on the importance of information literacy among high school students. This study used a proposed theoretical framework to guide the research. This theoretical framework was developed based on previous study on information literacy skills. It illustrates a dependent variable (High school students' IL performance); and three independent variables (IL through school curriculum; IL through social media; and IL

competence). The framework was used to answer the main research objectives. Finding revealed that there are still rooms for improvement pertaining to information literacy education. The author advised that there is need to go for more attractive and exciting ways to deliver information literacy to the young, IT-savvy school children, one of which is through social media. School children can pick up on a new way to look for, evaluate, search, and use information more effectively by interacting through social medial.

Malliari, Togia, Korobili, and Nitsos (2014) explored information literacy skill levels among high school students and need to incorporate information literacy in the education process in Greek secondary school education. More specifically, a survey was conducted among first year high school students in Thessaloniki, Greece. The procedure provided 344 usable questionnaires. The results of the study suggest that first year high school students in Greece are accustomed to using computers in their daily live, they use the internet to satisfy personal needs, but they have problems in locating and evaluating information for school work. The author suggested that there is need to embed information literacy instruction into secondary education, and also the need to create an online information literacy tutorial. Therefore, an online information literacy tutorial is being developed in line with Big6 model and constructivist approaches.

Majid, Chang, and Foo (2006) carried out a study to assess the information literacy and cyber-wellness skills of secondary 3 (grade 9) students, age 14-15, in Singapore. The study was carried out after the Ministry of Education in Singapore has introduced aspects of information literacy in schools through incorporating components into the syllabi of various subjects. A pilot-survey tested online survey, validated by information literacy experts from Canada, Hong Kong, Kuwait, and Thailand, was used for data collection. The survey was taken by 2,458 students from 11 secondary schools in different geographical zones of Singapore. It was found that the use of school libraries and their resources was at a very low level. The majority of the students approached classmates and friends for help in solving their information related problems. Only a small fraction consults the school librarian.

Mezbah-ul-Islam and Ahmed (2011) carried out a study on information literacy skills among female students of rural secondary school of Dhaka district, Bangladesh. The population frame for the study consists of the female students in the Class-X of four female secondary high schools of Savar and Keraniganj Upazilas of Dhaka districts. A random sample of 50 female

students each from the four schools was drawn for the sample of the study. For collecting data, survey method was adopted as each of the school was visited with a team to help in administration of questionnaires. The survey method was supported with interviews and observations. The questionnaire was formed and tested according to the textbooks. Findings revealed that majority of the students did not identify their textbooks as the source of information for them. It also revealed that majority of the students have little or no knowledge about library and they do not use it as a source of information. Result also show that majority of the students do not identify with mass media as a source of information. Generally, the level of information literacy skill among the students is low.

Methodology

In an attempt to find out information literacy level among senior secondary students in Ilorin, Kwara State, a descriptive survey method was conducted among Senior Secondary School Class 1 to 3 (S.S.S 1-3) in some selected schools in Ilorin metropolis. The study focused on three (3) secondary schools. These schools include one An-Nur Islamic College, Ilorin (privately-owned), St. Charles College, Ilorin (state-government owned), and Federal Government College, Ilorin (federal-government owned). The population for this study consists of secondary school students in these schools. The total population of the students in each school goes thus; An-Nur Islamic College, Ilorin (315 students), St. Charles College, Ilorin (782 students), and Federal Government College, Ilorin (861 students). Hence, disproportional stratified sampling technique was adopted with 70 students each from each stratum of the schools. Therefore, the sample size for this study is 210 students. Respondents were selected using simple random technique to select 70 students in each school.

The instrument used for the collection of data in this study is questionnaire, which was titled “Questionnaire on Information Literacy Level among Senior Secondary Students in Ilorin (QILLSSSI)”. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. Section A requires respondent’s bio-data information while section B contained the items. Section B was divided into five parts based on each objectives of the study. The questionnaires response was in 4-Likert rating scale where Strongly Agree [SA], Agree [A], Disagree [D], and Strongly Disagree [SD]. Questionnaires were distributed in the three schools by the group members and other assistants.

The instrument reliability was tested with Cronbach's alpha and the coefficient return of $r=0.85$. This shows that the instrument is reliable to measure what is designed to measure.

Data Analysis and Presentation

This segment focuses on the data analysis and presentation. A total of two hundred and ten (210) copies of the questionnaire were administered to the respondents, out of which only one hundred and ninety-two (192) were successfully filled and returned, which gives a return rate of 91.4%. The return rate was considered satisfactory for this study.

Data presentation is subdivided into two parts namely; the segments include demographic distribution of respondents and distribution of respondents' responses to research questions. Frequency and simple percentage was used to present respondents' demographic distribution and responses to research questions based on the data gathered from the field.

Analysis of the Demographic Segment of the Questionnaire

This study collected demographic data on the respondents' schools, classes, gender, and age.

Table 1.1: Demographic Distributions of the Respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
School of Respondents		
An-Nur Islamic College	62	32.3
Federal Government College, Ilorin	66	34.4
St. Charles College	64	33.3
Total	192	100.0
Classes of Respondents		
S. S. S. 1	60	31.2
S. S. S. 2	68	35.4
S. S. S. 3	64	33.3
Total	192	100.0
Gender		
Male	88	45.8
Female	104	54.2
Total	192	100.0
Age		
Below 12 years old	-	0.0

12-14 years old	81	42.2
15-17 years old	92	47.9
18 and above	19	9.9
Total	192	100.0

To conduct this study, structured questionnaires were distributed to users. The number of questionnaire distributed was 210, out of this, 192 responded to the survey by completely filling their questionnaires. By this, it is established that 91.4% return rate was achieved.

Table 1.1 above shows that 62 (32.3%) of the respondents were from An-Nur Islamic College, Ilorin, 66 (34.4%) of the respondents were from Federal Government College, Ilorin, while 64 (33.3%) of the respondents were from St. Charles College, Ilorin. Table shows that 60 (31.2%) of the respondents were in S. S. S. Class 1, 68 (35.4%) of the respondents were in S. S. S. Class 2, while 64 (33.3%) of the respondents were in S. S. S. Class 3.

Table 1.1 also shows that 88 (45.8%) of the respondents were male, while 104 (54.2%) of the respondents were female. Table shows that 81 (42.2%) of the respondents were between the age of 12 to 14, 92 (47.9%) of the respondents were between the age of 15 to 17, while 19 (9.9%) of the respondents were 18 years and above.

Table 1.2: To Identify Problem and Current Knowledge on Identified Gaps

Variables	Responses									
	Strongly Agreed		Agreed		Disagreed		Strongly Disagreed		Total	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
I can identify lack of knowledge in a subject area	45	23.4	26	13.5	68	35.4	53	27.6	192	100.0
I can articulate current knowledge on a topic	71	37.0	63	32.8	36	18.8	22	11.5	192	100.0
I can recognize a need for information	91	47.4	33	17.2	42	21.9	26	13.5	192	100.0
I can identify which type of information will best meet my needs	83	43.2	64	33.3	26	13.5	19	9.9	192	100.0
I can identify different formats in which information may be provided	66	34.4	81	42.2	21	10.9	24	12.5	192	100.0

Table 1.2 above shows that 71 (37.0%) of the respondents agreed that they can identify lack of knowledge in a subject area while 121 (63.0%) of the respondents disagreed that they can identify lack of knowledge in a subject area. It also shows that 134 (69.8%) of the respondents agreed that they can articulate current knowledge on a topic while 58 (30.2%) of the respondents disagreed that they can articulate current knowledge on a topic.

Table 1.2 also shows that 124 (64.6%) of the respondents agreed that they can recognize a need for information while 68 (35.4%) of the respondents disagreed that they can recognize a need for information. It also shows that 147 (76.6%) of the respondents agreed that they can identify which type of information will best meet my needs while 45 (23.4%) of the respondents disagreed that they can identify which type of information will best meet my needs. It also shows that 147 (76.6%) of the respondents agreed that they can identify different formats in which information may be provided while 45 (23.4%) of the respondents disagreed that they can identify different formats in which information may be provided.

Table 1.3: To construct strategies for locating information and data

Variables	Responses									
	Strongly Agreed		Agreed		Disagreed		Strongly Disagreed		Total	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
I can scope search questions clearly and in appropriate language	26	13.5	15	7.8	85	44.3	66	34.4	192	100.0
I can identify appropriate search techniques	10	5.2	17	8.9	101	52.6	64	33.3	192	100.0
I can identify specialist search tools	25	13.0	6	3.1	126	65.6	35	18.2	192	100.0
I can define a search strategy by using appropriate terminologies	48	25.0	54	28.1	48	25.0	42	21.9	192	100.0
I can select the most appropriate search tools	76	39.6	79	41.1	12	6.2	25	13.0	192	100.0

Table 1.3 above shows that 41 (21.9%) of the respondents agreed that they can scope search questions clearly and in appropriate language while 151 (78.1%) of the respondents disagreed that they can scope search questions clearly and in appropriate language. It also shows

that 27 (14.1%) of the respondents agreed that they can identify appropriate search techniques while 165 (85.9%) of the respondents disagreed that they can identify appropriate search techniques.

Table 1.3 also shows that 31 (16.1%) of the respondents agreed that they can identify specialist search tools while 161 (83.9%) of the respondents disagreed that they can identify specialist search tools. Table above shows that 102 (53.1%) of the respondents agreed that they can define a search strategy by using appropriate terminologies while 90 (46.9%) of the respondents disagreed that they can define a search strategy by using appropriate terminologies. Finally, table 1.3 shows that 155 (80.7%) of the respondents agreed that they can select the most appropriate search tools while 37 (19.3%) of the respondents disagreed that they can select the most appropriate search tools.

Table 1.4: To Locate and Access the Information and Data They Need

Variables	Responses									
	Strongly Agreed		Agreed		Disagreed		Strongly Disagreed		Total	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
I can use indexes and catalogue card to locate relevant items	21	10.9	15	7.8	86	44.8	70	36.5	192	100.0
I can use database to locate relevant information	11	5.7	10	5.2	102	53.1	69	35.9	192	100.0
I use Boolean operators (AND, OR) to search for information	44	22.9	67	34.9	36	18.8	45	23.4	192	100.0
I use the internet often to locate information	19	9.9	22	11.5	63	32.8	88	45.8	192	100.0
I use library often to search for information	68	35.4	52	27.1	31	16.1	41	21.4	192	100.0

Table 1.3 above shows that 36 (18.7%) of the respondents agreed that they use indexes and catalogue card in their search for information while 156 (81.3%) of the respondents disagreed that they use indexes and catalogue card to search for information. It also shows that 21 (10.9%) of the respondents agreed that they use database to locate information while 171 (89.1%) of the respondents disagreed that they use database to locate information.

Table 1.3 also shows that 111 (57.8%) of the respondents agreed that they use Boolean operators to search for information while 81 (42.2%) of the respondents disagreed that they use

Boolean operators to search for information. Table above shows that 41 (21.4%) of the respondents agreed that they use internet often to search for information while 151 (78.6%) of the respondents disagreed that they use internet often to search for information. Finally, table 1.3 shows that 120 (62.5%) of the respondents agreed that they use library in search for information while 72 (37.5%) of the respondents disagreed that they use library in search for in search for information.

Table 1.5: To Evaluate and Manage the Information

Variables	Responses									
	Strongly Agreed		Agreed		Disagreed		Strongly Disagreed		Total	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
I can differentiate between different information resources	81	42.2	56	29.2	25	13.0	30	15.6	192	100.0
I can assess the credibility of gathered data and information	92	47.9	41	21.4	32	16.7	27	14.1	192	100.0
I can read critically and identify key points	90	46.9	47	24.5	41	21.4	14	7.3	192	100.0
I can make appropriate information available as required	76	39.6	63	32.8	27	14.1	26	13.5	192	100.0
I can cite information collected with appropriate referencing style	16	8.3	17	8.9	82	42.7	77	40.1	192	100.0

Table 1.5 shows that 137 (71.4%) of the respondents agreed that they can differentiate between different information resources while 55 (18.6%) of the respondents disagreed that they can differentiate between different information resources. Table 1.5 shows that 133 (69.3%) of the respondents agreed that they can assess the credibility of gathered data and information while 59 (31.7%) of the respondents disagreed that they can assess the credibility of gathered data and information.

Table 1.5 above shows that 137 (71.4%) of the respondents agreed that they can read critically and identify key points while 55 (28.7%) of the respondents disagreed that they can read critically and identify key points. Table 1.5 above shows that 139 (72.4%) of the respondents agreed that they can make appropriate information available as required while 53

(27.6%) of the respondents disagreed that they can make appropriate information available as required. Finally, Table 1.5 above shows that 33 (17.2%) of the respondents agreed that they can cite information collected with appropriate referencing style while 159 (82.8%) of the respondents disagreed that they can cite information collected with appropriate referencing style.

Table 1.6: To Present Information

Variables	Responses									
	Strongly Agreed		Agreed		Disagreed		Strongly Disagreed		Total	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
I can analyze and present data appropriately	81	42.2	56	29.2	25	13.0	30	15.6	192	100.0
I can summarize documents and reports verbally and in writing	92	47.9	41	21.4	32	16.7	27	14.1	192	100.0
I can incorporate new findings into the perspective of existing knowledge	90	46.9	47	24.5	41	21.4	14	7.3	192	100.0

Table 1.6 shows that 137 (71.4%) of the respondents agreed that they can analyze and present data appropriately while 55 (18.6%) of the respondents disagreed that they can analyze and present data appropriately. Table 1.6 shows that 133 (69.3%) of the respondents agreed that they can summarize documents and reports verbally and in writing while 59 (31.7%) of the respondents disagreed that they can summarize documents and reports verbally and in writing. Finally, table 1.6 above shows that 137 (71.4%) of the respondents agreed that they can incorporate new findings into the perspective of existing knowledge while 55 (28.7%) of the respondents disagreed that they can incorporate new findings into the perspective of existing knowledge.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study revealed that more than half of the respondents can identify lack of knowledge in a subject area. The study also revealed that majority of the respondents can articulate current knowledge on a topic. Furthermore, based on the responses of the respondents, one can believe that the respondents can recognize a need for information. The perception of the majority of the respondents shows that they can identify which type of information will best

meet their needs. It also revealed that three-quarter of the respondents can identify different formats in which information may be provided.

The study revealed that more than three-quarter of the respondents cannot scope search questions clearly and with appropriate language. It also revealed that a significant number of the respondents cannot identify appropriate search techniques. Furthermore, it also revealed that a large number of the respondents cannot identify specialist search tools. It can also be observed from the presented data that more than half of the respondents can define a search strategy by using appropriate terminologies. It also revealed that majority of the respondents can select the most appropriate search tools to search for information.

These results are consistent with the findings of other studies which found that students lack the skill and experience to construct efficient and sophisticated search strategies, as well as to evaluate the retrieved resources (Burton & Chadwick, 2000; Jackson & Hansen, 2006; Julien & Barker, 2009; Lorenzen, 2001; Merchant & Hepworth, 2002; Mittermeyer, 2005; Rehman & Alfaresi, 2009). The low level of search competence might stem from the fact that there is little or no information searching skills that were thought in the various schools except they acquire information search skills on their own without any formal or organized training.

The study also revealed that less than a quarter of the respondents do not use indexes and catalogue card in their search for information. It also revealed that a significant amount of the respondents do not use database to search for information. Also, from the study, it was revealed that notable numbers of the respondents do not use Boolean operators in their search for information. It is also revealed that more than half of the respondents use the internet to search for information while over three-quarter of the respondents use the library in search of information. Here, it is noteworthy that despite the general perception of people in this information age that internet is the first resorts in searching for information, students still visit the library to search for information than they use the internet.

Malliari, Togia, Korobili, and Nitsos (2014) found out that majority of students in Greece are exposed to computers since they were in primary school, a finding clearly suggesting that high-school students in Greece are quite familiar with information technology to search for information. Their findings, however, show that only one third of the students were searching the internet for both personal and educational reasons, while more than half of the sample used

Internet only for personal reasons. This corroborates the findings in this study that they students do not use the internet to seek academic information. There is evidence in the literature that the internet is primarily conceived by high-school students as a means of communication and as a vast repository of music and films (D'Esposito & Gardner, 1999; Machmias, Mioduser & Shemla, 1999; Pivec, 1998; Sjoberg, 1999). On the other hand, Malliari (2014) found out that students do not seem to rely much on libraries, a finding that confirms previous studies. It has been observed that many students enter colleges and universities without having used a library before (Pavey, 2006).

The study revealed that majority of the respondents can differentiate between different information resources. It also revealed that most of the respondents can assess the credibility of gathered data and information. It also revealed that significant number of the respondents can read critically and identify key points. It can also be observed from the findings that majority of the respondents can make appropriate information available as required. It was also revealed that most of the respondents cannot cite information collected with appropriate referencing style. The findings of the study revealed that most of the respondents can analyze and present data appropriately. It also showed that substantial number of the respondents can summarize documents and reports verbally in writing. Finally, it was revealed in the study that majority of the respondents can incorporate new findings into the perspective of existing knowledge.

Conclusion

Information literacy skills are essential for every human being because information is vital to everyone in every walk of life. The general objective of this study is to determine the level of information literacy skills of secondary school students in some selected secondary schools in Kwara State.

The finding of this study shows that the students have the skills to determine when they need information. However, the study revealed that the students do not have the necessary information literacy skills to search and find information. This might hamper the students' performances in class if they cannot identify, search, manage, evaluate, and present information effectively to propel their academic sojourn.

Conclusively, it can be deduce that the students have the necessary skills to determine when they need information but do not have the skills to go about searching for the information they need. It is also noteworthy that students use the library effectively for their academic and personal information.

Recommendation

Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, the researchers recommend that policy makers in education sector should try and introduce information literacy skills as a subject in the secondary school curriculum so as to ensure that the students have the necessary information literacy skills rather than developing these skills through self-education. It is also advised that teachers that have adept knowledge in information literacy skills should be employed as the facilitators in this subject.

It is also recommended that public libraries should not collect any token from properly identified secondary school students whom want to make use the public libraries. This will further improve their use of library and improve their information search skills and consequently information literacy skills. The students should also be given user education on the use of some information searching tools like indexes and catalogue cards. This will further ease their information search and aid their information literacy skills.

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